

Sometimes I believe in ghosts.

Only when I'm haunted —  
not spectral apparitions,  
nor even former persons,  
but by presences never there.

Usually it's earrings.

Long ones, that don't come from my jewelry box,  
hanging from piercings I don't have,

beating                    against my throat                    just                    so.

I wonder if it's the holes  
that are key  
grandchild-ghosts of knife games  
I played when I was a girl.

But perhaps they're more of a dream —

I had a dream once  
where I smoked cigarettes.  
I could feel the smoke fill  
my lungs when I dragged on it,  
feel the nicotine rush in my blood.

I've never held a cigarette in my hands.

I'm haunted by selves I never was.